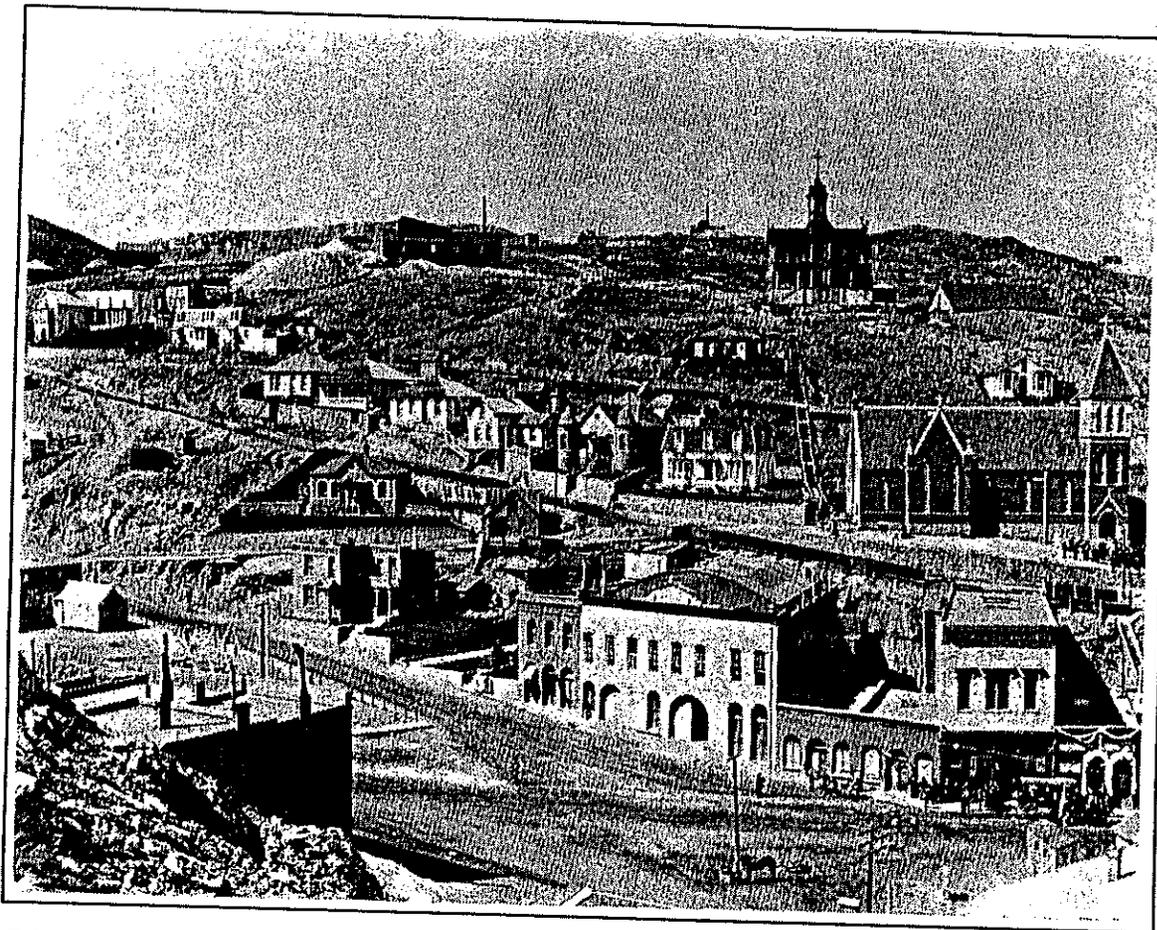


CHAPTER 14:

SPRUCE STREET RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD



DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR CENTRAL CITY

Chapter Cover Photo:

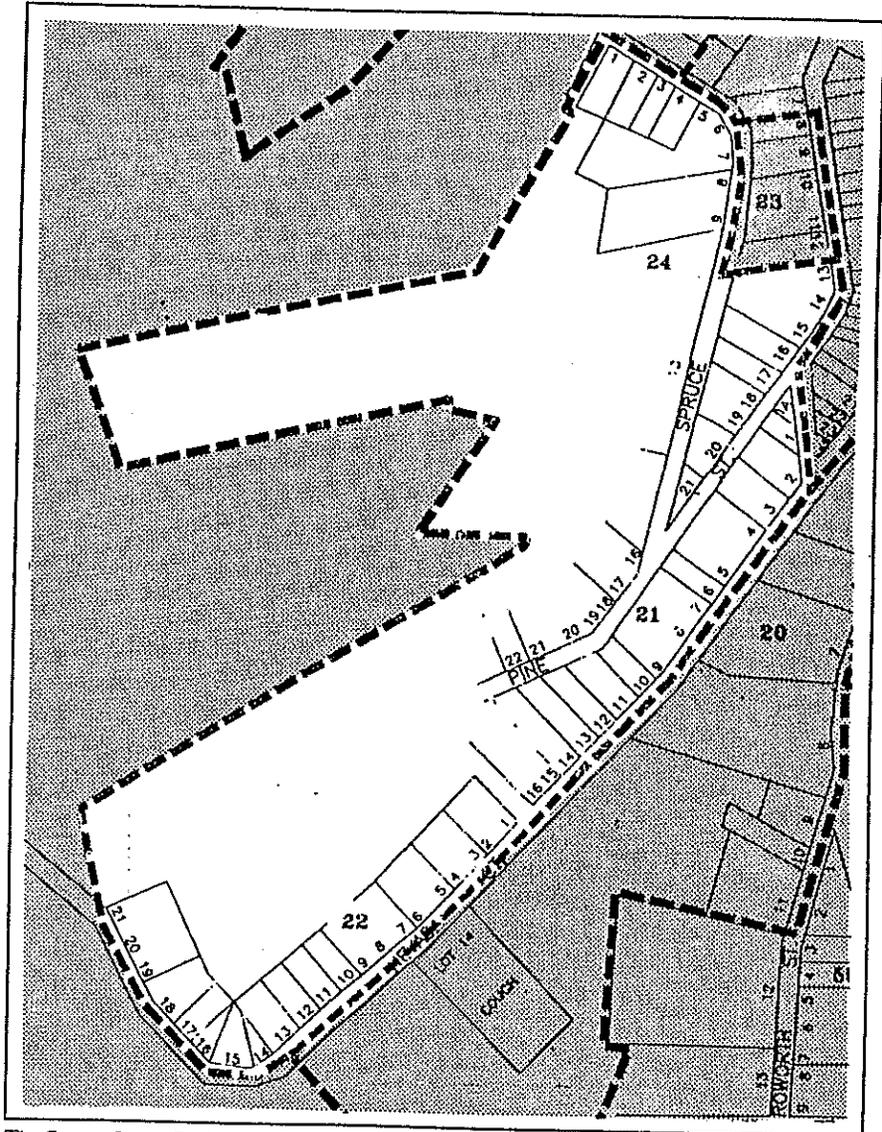
A Sunday morning scene, looking west toward "Academy Hill". Photograph taken by H.H. Lake around 1900.

CHAPTER 14 SPRUCE STREET RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD: DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Spruce Street Neighborhood is primarily residential in character and includes all of Spruce Street, the southern portion of Pine Street and the west side of Nevada Street. Located on the east face of Gunnel Hill, this neighborhood enjoys easterly views over most of the City.

Goals for the Neighborhood

Because many historic structures survive in the Spruce Street Neighborhood, the overall scale and character remains that of a residential area composed primarily of single-family dwellings. The goal for the neighborhood is to preserve the sense of time and place that exists here, and to minimize the visual effects of change while accommodating new development. The preservation of all historic structures is a high priority and new buildings should blend in with the established scale and character. The City also encourages the rehabilitation and development of residential structures along Spruce Street and the west side of Pine Street. New structures should be similar in size to historic structures in the neighborhood and should be sited with the natural topography of the land.



The Spruce Street Residential Neighborhood.

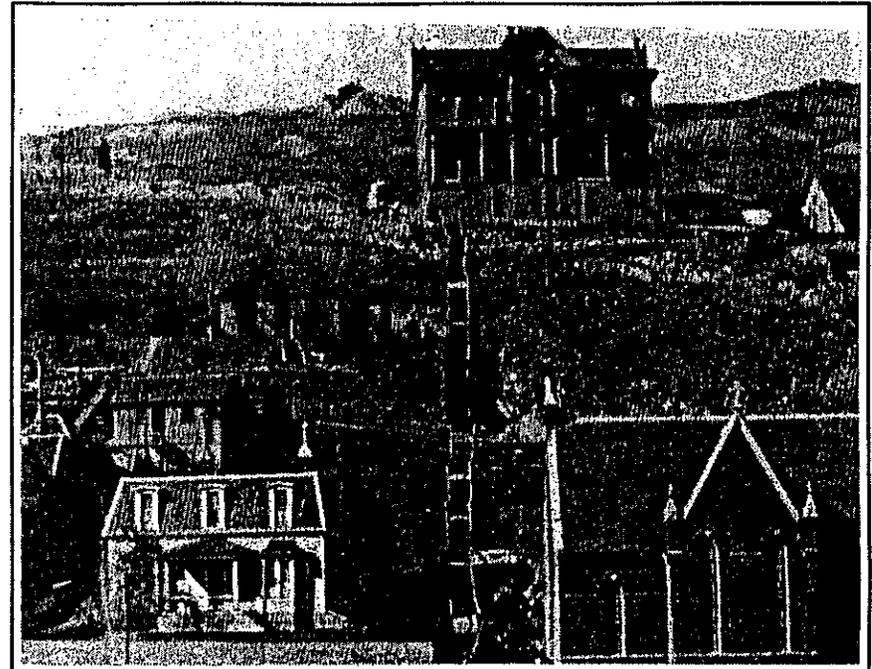
Historical Descriptions

Building Description (Historical)

Located at the base of Gunnell Hill, this neighborhood is composed of two streets, Spruce and Pine, with residential structures being the dominant building type. Some exceptions bear note: three other structures were important to this neighborhood, including the Coeur d'Alene Mine, St. Aloysius Academy and St. Mary's Catholic Church.

The remains of the Coeur d'Alene Mine, located on a ridge near the top of Gunnell Hill just south of St. Aloysius Academy, is a one-story, wood frame shaft house with wood siding. Visible from most points in and around the City, the Coeur d'Alene provided a prominent view of a mining structure. Next to the Coeur d'Alene is the St. Aloysius Academy. A boarding and day school directed by the Sisters of St. Aloysius, it was opened in 1875 and was torn down in the mid-1930s. A brick structure, 2-1/2 stories high and 53 feet square with a distinctive cupola, it stood as a focal point on the ridge above Spruce Street. Next to St. Aloysius is the Academy Reservoir, a low-roofed structure that was part of Central City's water supply system, in conjunction with the reservoir on upper Eureka Street. Finally, below St. Aloysius, St. Mary's of the Assumption Catholic Church was located on Pine Street, on top of foundation walls of native stone. It is a commanding 45 foot by 85 foot brick structure in a Gothic style, with a deeply-pitched gabled roof and a three-story high tower. Also visible from most neighborhoods in the City, St. Mary's contrasts in scale to the residential and commercial structures which surrounds it.

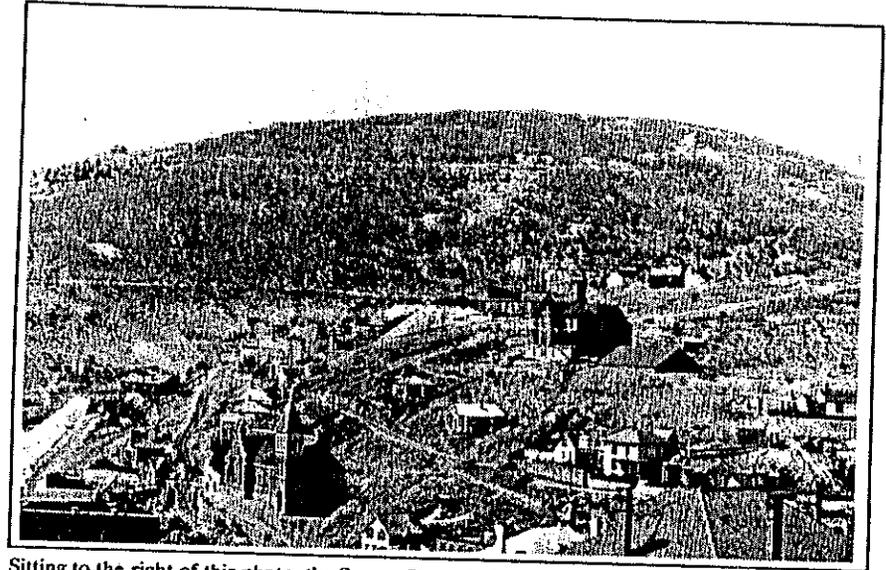
The residential structures that stepped up Spruce and Pine Streets were either one or two stories in height, and of wood frame construction; only a couple of brick residences are the exception. Most houses were constructed during Central City's boom period, from the mid-1870s to around 1920. Included in this era were the homes once located on upper Pine known as "Quality Row", which served as the "red light" district for Central City. These structures were rather elaborate for their day, befitting the nature of their trade.



The Spruce Street Residential Neighborhood, west view looking toward St. Aloysius Academy, circa 1900.

Site Description (Historical)

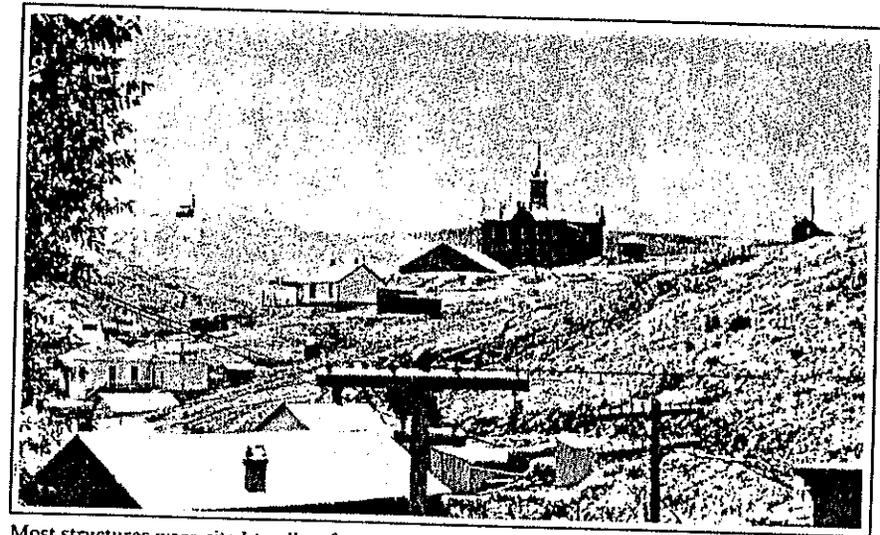
The structures in this neighborhood, down the hill on Spruce and Pine Streets, also took advantage of the natural topography of the land. Residences covered one to three building lots and were raised on elevated retaining rubble rock walls of dry-laid stone at the street edge. Small yards separated the retaining wall from the house, which was usually further separated by a covered front porch. The "landmark" of this neighborhood was the St. Aloysius Academy, which held a commanding presence near the top of Gunnell Hill and took advantage of sweeping views over Central City.



Sitting to the right of this photo, the Spruce Street Neighborhood as it appeared between 1890-1899.

Neighborhood Views and Character (Historical)

Due to building on a hill on elevated foundations, most of the residences in this neighborhood had prominent views over Central City. The Commercial Core, in the immediate foreground, would have appeared to residents in earlier periods much as it does today. Central Hill, directly to the east, had the railroad line at its base and was bare of trees. The same was true of Winnebago Hill, with its slope full of residences (and a few mines) to the north, and Quartz Hill and Russell Gulch to the south, leading to Nevadaville.

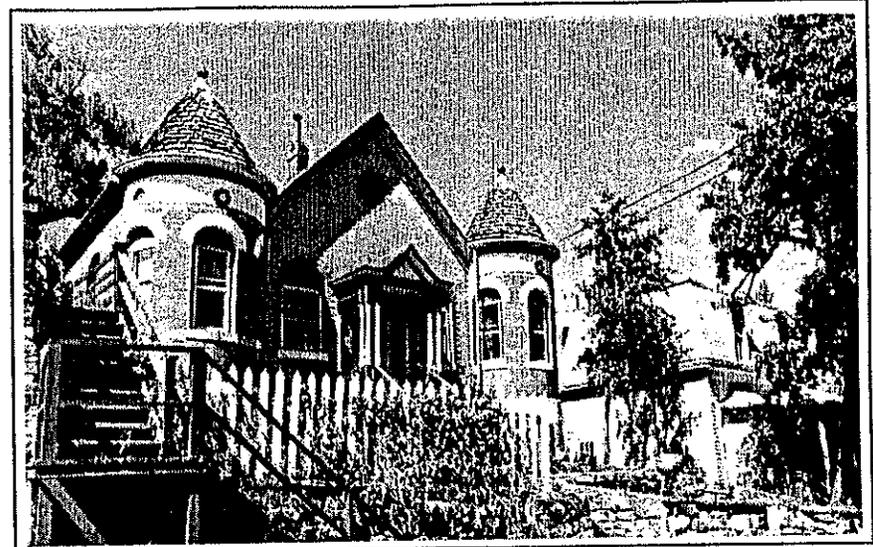


Most structures were sited to allow for prominent views over Central City (circa 1900).

Present Day (1992) Description

Building Description (1992)

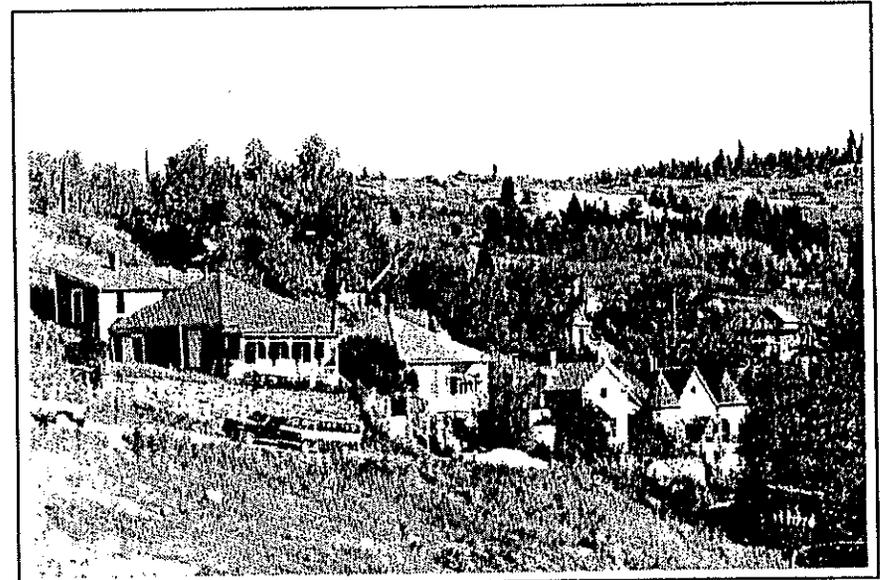
Buildings are predominantly wood frame or brick, have gable roofs, and stand one and two stories high. The residences are vernacular in style and display a variety of details, ranging from Romanesque arches to Greek Revival porches. Turrets, fanciful porches and dormers are characteristic of this neighborhood. A significant portion of the neighborhood is now vacant land, and development, if it occurs, must be handled sensitively if the area is to retain its historic character.



Residences in the Spruce Street Neighborhood express a variety of forms.

Site Description (1992)

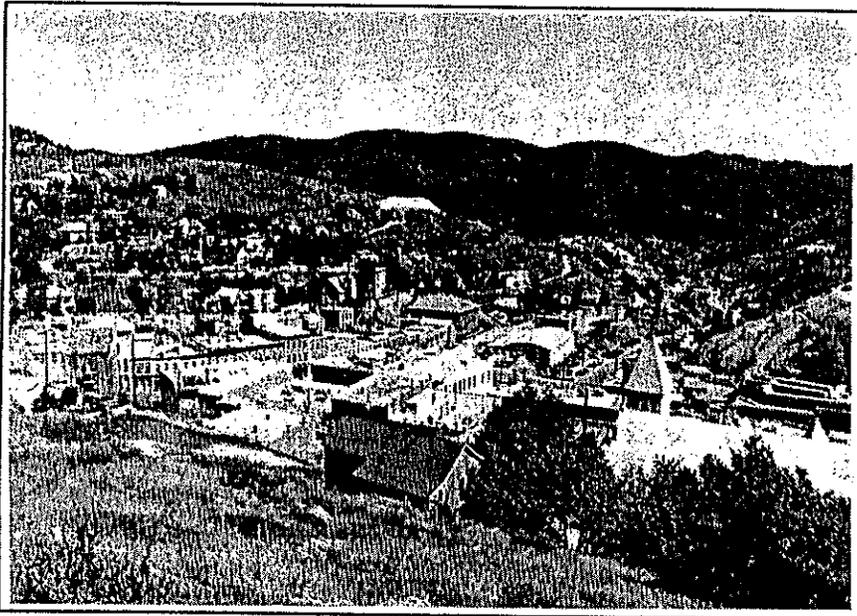
Historic residences in the Spruce Street Neighborhood generally cover from one to three building lots, which range in width from 40 to 100 feet and are generally 100 feet deep. Most lots are typified by the rubble rock retaining wall at the street edge with steps leading up to the entrance and/or the front porch. Many of the rubble rock walls have wood picket or iron fences upon them. Most of the residences are elevated high above street level, from three to twelve feet, thereby taking advantage of the views.



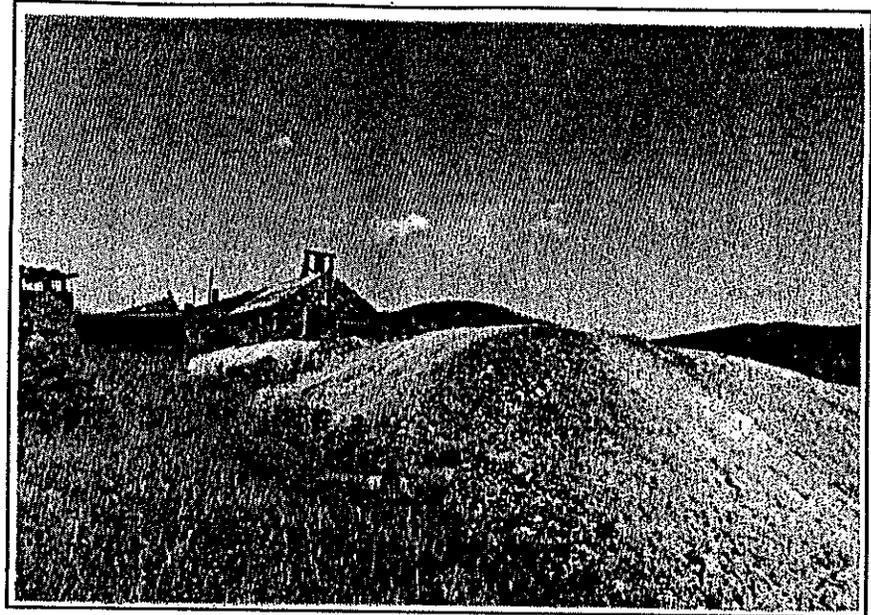
A view of the residences along Pine Street.

Neighborhood Views and Character (1992)

The views from public ways in the Spruce Street Neighborhood focus onto the Commercial Core, and the back of buildings which line Main and Lawrence Streets. From the upper portions of Spruce and Pine Streets, views of the rooftops of the Commercial Core to the east can be seen. The view north is of the High Street/ Northside Residential Neighborhood, while the view south is of the mine tailings and the parking lots of the Tailings Neighborhood.



From the upper portions of Spruce and Pine Streets, views of the rooftops of the Commercial Core to the east can be seen.

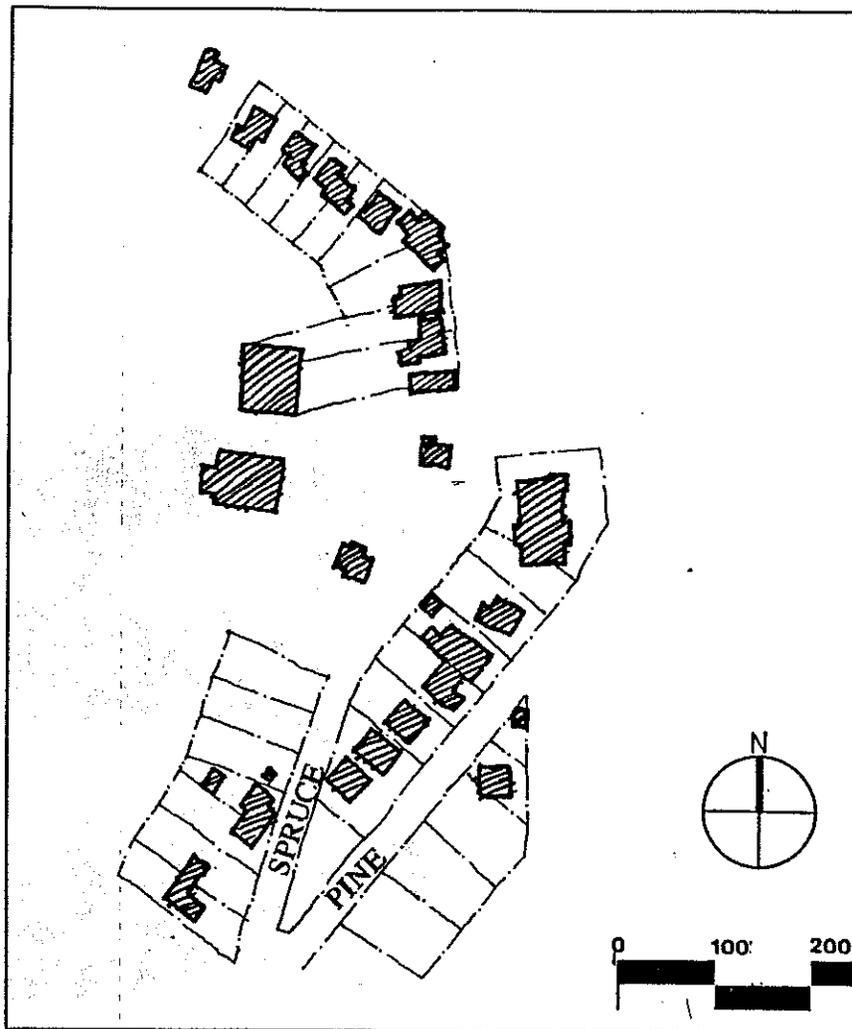


The Coeur d'Alene Mine today.

Guideline 2:

Building footprints should reflect the size, shape, and proportion of similar existing footprints within the Spruce Street Residential Neighborhood.

- Square, rectangular, L-shaped, and clustered building footprints are most common in this neighborhood.
- Footprints of new residential construction should range in size and shape to reflect historic footprints, the largest being a 35 foot by 50 foot residence.
- A larger footprint is acceptable if it can be proven through historic documentation that a larger footprint existed in the neighborhood.
- For sites where historically non-residential buildings existed, the size of the historic footprint may be considered.



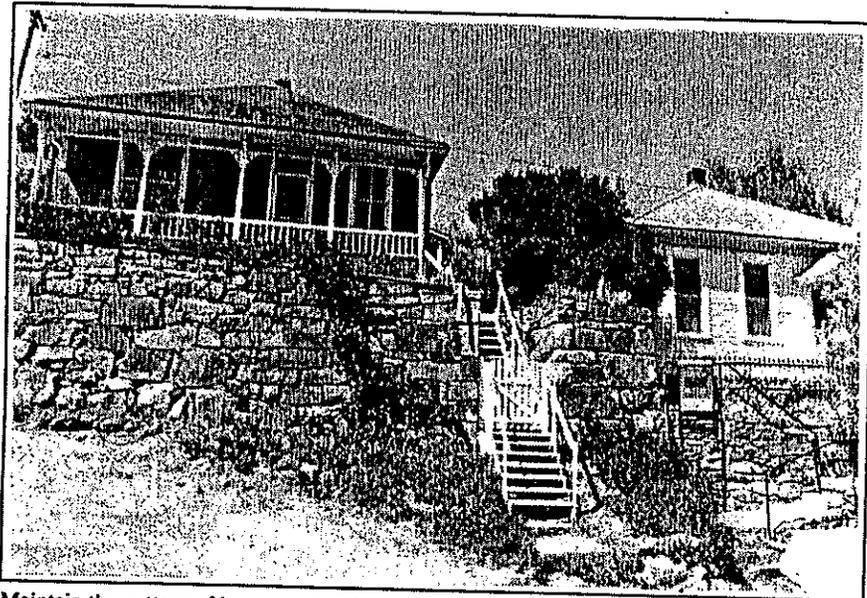
Building footprints from the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1900.

Site Design Guidelines

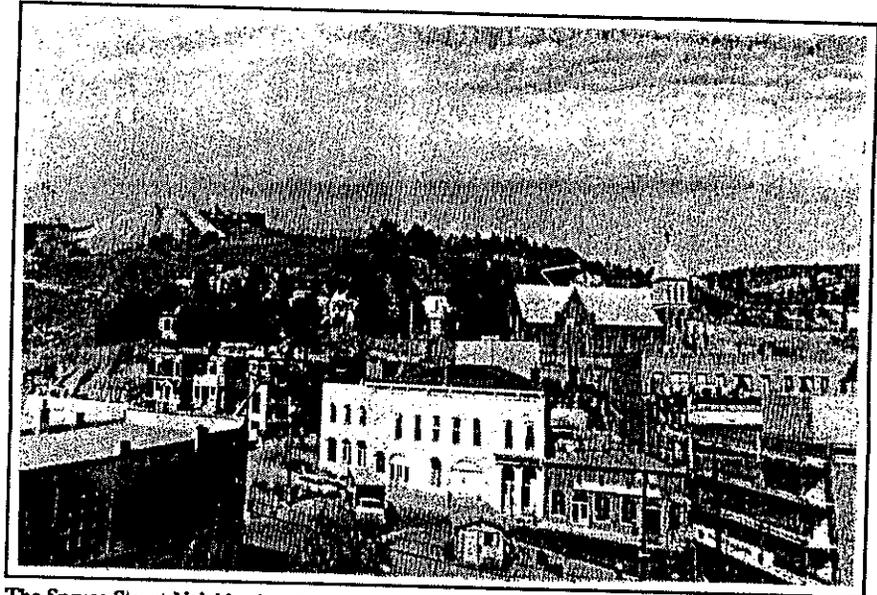
Guideline 3:

Maintain the pattern of lot assemblies in the Spruce Street Residential Neighborhood.

- Typically, individual building lots range from 40-100 feet wide and 100 feet deep.
- These lots reflect the natural topography of the neighborhood. Building lots should align along the winding streets of Central City which conform to the contours of the hillsides and gulches. This produces an organic, "non-gridded" neighborhood pattern that must be maintained.
- New streets or drives should maintain the curvilinear character of lot arrangements.
- New development should continue to express this pattern of development by siting buildings similar to the historic manner and by using landscape elements that reflect the traditional lot widths.



Maintain the pattern of lot assemblies in the Spruce Street Residential Neighborhood.



The Spruce Street Neighborhood as viewed from the Commercial Core.

Neighborhood Views and Character Guidelines

Lot configurations and site topography are important factors that strongly influence the character of the neighborhood. The residences occupying these lots not only respond to the above physical conditions, but also to visual conditions such as a view to a particular hillside or other landmark.

Guideline 4:

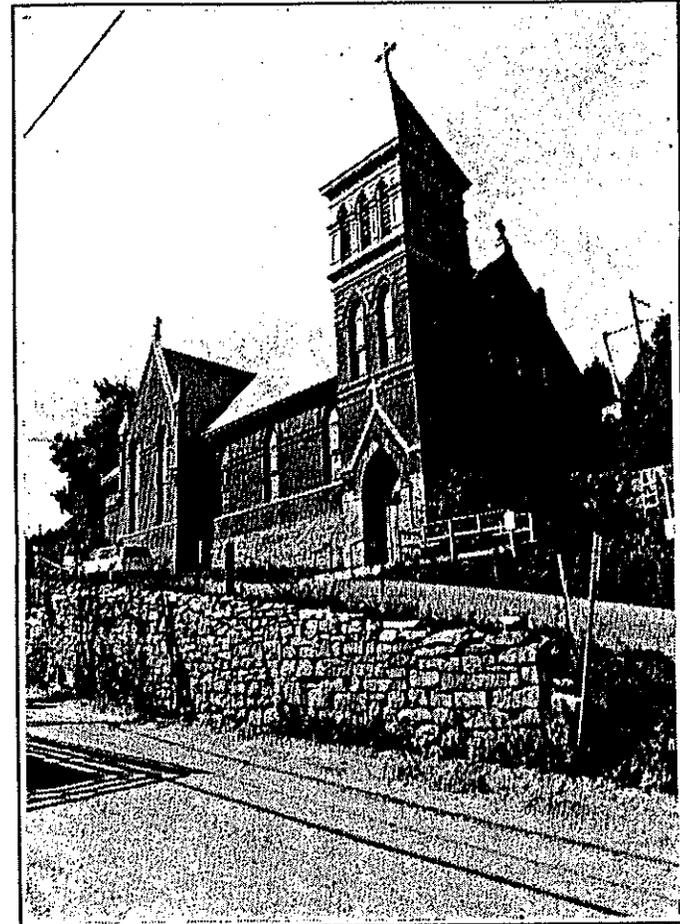
Maintain the character of the street by preserving views of local historic landmarks and significant natural features wherever possible.

- Views to Quartz Hill, Central Hill, Winnebago Hill, and of local landmarks such as the remains of St. Aloysius Academy, St. Mary's Catholic Church and the Coeur d'Alene Mine, should be protected and maintained. New development in the neighborhood should not obstruct these views but take advantage of them.
- Maintaining a view corridor to one of these community focal points may involve providing a building setback, an easement, or siting a drive or walkway along the view axis.

Guideline 5:

The overall mass and form of the Spruce Street Residential Neighborhood should be respected and maintained.

- By using similar building masses, forms, and rhythms in this area, the visual continuity of the neighborhood will be preserved.
- In general, most residential structures range from 25 to 40 feet in width and are typically twice as deep as they are wide.



The views to and from St. Mary's of the Assumption Church and the other landmarks of the Spruce Street Neighborhood should be protected and maintained.